

First Presbyterian Church Takes Another Forward Step



SOMETHING over thirty years ago a handful of earnest men and women made up their minds to establish a Presbyterian congregation in Salt Lake. The immediate outlook was not promising, future prospects not glowing. Nevertheless these zealous Presbyterians decided that they should have a church. They were fortunate in deciding on the undertaking at this particular time, for if they should conquer all the difficulties which promised to present themselves, what success might they not ultimately attain?

A third of a century has passed since these pioneer Presbyterians joined hands in common faith, and time has been as kind as ever was looked for by the founders. The place of worship, from the loft of a stable, has grown to one of the handsomest edifices in the west—or, rather, will have grown when the congregation of the First Presbyterian church bids farewell to the old building next Sunday.

Growth of Church.

From a membership of ten the enrollment has grown to something like 225. From private classes in the basement of a church have grown the College Institute and Westminster college. From the seed planted by the men and women who held their first communion and started a building fund Nov. 12, 1871, has grown a building of worship which ranks first with its kind in Salt Lake.

It is with this record behind them that the members of the First Presbyterian church will leave the old home at Second East and Second South streets for the new one at Brigham and C. The new First Presbyterian church is not quite completed, and for a time the congregation will occupy the large Sunday school rooms in the north wing. The farthest sections to be preached in the old church will be delivered by the pastor, Rev. W. M. Paden, this morning and evening. Next Sunday the members of the congregation will form at the old structure and will march in a body to their new place of worship.

Twelve at First Service.

Rev. Josiah Welch arrived in Salt Lake Sept. 28, 1871. There were twelve persons present at his first Sunday service, which was held in Faust hall, the second floor of a Second South

street livery stable, Oct. 8, 1871. The congregation shortly moved to a skating rink on West Second South street, and a Sunday school was organized. On the following Sunday, Nov. 12, the First Presbyterian church of Salt Lake was organized, with ten members. Dr. Sheldon Jackson preached the sermon—Deut. 2: 21: "Begin to possess that thou mayest inherit the land." After the morning services a congregational meeting was held and steps were taken toward raising money to erect a house of worship.

Early Church Members.

The names of J. J. Critchlow, E. H. Parsons and J. C. Royle appear in the first minutes made by the pastor, J. J. Critchlow, father of E. B. Critchlow, now Indian agent at White Rocks at the time, but came in to attend some of the early meetings. He is now dead. E. H. Parsons was United States marshal, now living in the east. J. C. Royle is still a resident of Salt Lake and a leading member of the church. Mrs. J. C. Royle was appointed chairman of a committee of women, the record shows, to solicit Christmas offerings from the Presbyterian churches of the United States. Over \$2,500 was raised through the 1,500 or more letters sent out by the committee.

After a few months in the skating rink on West Temple street, in a room over a livery stable on Second South street, just east of Main street, and in Woodhouse hall on Main street, the church found a temporary home in the Liberal Institute, the site of the present Presbyterian College Institute. Meanwhile Rev. Mr. Welch had been indefatigable in his endeavors to interest the outside world in the new church enterprise. It had been a hard struggle to gain a footing in Zion, but Mr. Welch finally found a friend in Dr. John Hall of the Fifth Avenue church of New York. In July, 1872, Dr. Hall visited Salt Lake.

Concerning this visit Mr. Welch wrote: "We had Dr. John Hall with us last Sunday and he preached two of his grand sermons. We had a very fine audience both morning and evening. He expressed himself as well pleased with our Sunday school and congregation. Monday morning I took him around and showed him a property which we had been 'coveting' for some time. This is a lot 15x175 feet and one of the most splendid locations in the city. The owner wanted to sell; he asked \$11,000. Dr. Hall looked the ground over and said: 'I wouldn't wait an hour to begin negotiations. This property will give you prestige and influence. As soon as the people

know that you have bought this property they will conclude that you have come here to stay, and that is what we intend."

First Church Built in 1874.

The property which Mr. Welch and his co-workers had been "coveting" was secured. The board of church erection gave \$4,000 toward the purchase, while a similar sum was given by wealthy members of Dr. Hall's congregation, the Stewart brothers.

Within a year and a half of the acquisition of a building site work was commenced on the First Presbyterian church. The present structure at Second East and Second South streets was erected at a cost of \$18,500. Dedication services were held Oct. 11, 1874.

In 1875, the first year of the church proper, two names were added to the roster of elders, of men who were to take a prominent part in the making of a great church and congregation—Mr. Royle and Professor J. H. Coyner. Professor Coyner started the school which has grown into the College Institute and Westminster college, in the basement of the church.

Death of Josiah Welch.

In the spring of 1876 the pastor of the church went east for medical care. He never returned, but after a brave battle against Bright's disease died at his old home in Ulrichville, O., March 18, 1877.

The meeting in which Rev. Mr. Welch was held extended far beyond the field in which he had chosen to labor. At the general assembly of the Presbyterian churches held in Chicago in 1877, the great missionary, Kendall, in speaking of missionary sacrifice, said: "What if Welch and his beautiful and accomplished wife have been snatched into glory? He has done his work—the church edifice is built in Salt Lake City, and the first Presbyterian church in the Great Salt Lake basin is due to his exertion."

During the long illness of Mr. Welch the church work was carried on under the ministry of Rev. D. J. McMillan, afterward synodical missionary for the Presbyterian church in this intermountain region, and later secretary of the board of home missions.

Rev. R. G. McNiece Second Pastor.

Rev. R. G. McNiece was called to the First Presbyterian church, June 1, 1877, coming, as had his predecessor, directly from the theological seminary at Princeton. His installation as pastor occurred a few months after his arrival.

In 1879 H. M. McMillan was elected elder and chosen clerk of the session, a position he has held ever since.

In 1881 special notice was made of

the tenth anniversary of the founding of the First Presbyterian church. During the course of memorial services held Nov. 12, 1881, Mr. Royle made an address, from which the following excerpts are made:

"During these years the exigencies of the business and the success, or failure of our great industries, have caused many people to come and go; many members have been added to our church, and many have gone north,

east and west from us to other fields of labor. Our Gentile population has decreased, but the membership of this church has increased and now (1881) numbers 88. Few or many, they have done battle for the truth, and have willingly and promptly responded to the call of duty."

In January, 1882, the Young People's society was organized. Dr. Ira E. Lyons and wife, Dr. Jesse Mills, paugh and others joined the congregation this year. The following year the names of W. E. Jacobs, W. C. Lyons, William F. Colton and others were added to the church roll. Five years later Judge G. W. Barch, Albert Martin and Frank Pierce were among the prominent newcomers.

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law, in which she might be as frightened as any other novice, but of the family circle. At the table, in the parlor, in the evening, when the family meet, to her husband, to her children, to her acquaintances she speaks her mind.

When John comes home in excellent spirits over a deal that he has successfully carried through, she throws cold water on his satisfaction by reminding him of former disappointments.

"Dear father always said that you were not cut out for a business man. You are too sanguine. Anybody can get the better of you in a bargain. I should feel much easier if you were a clerk."

This style of conversation is a distinct damper on John's enthusiasm. A man whose life is a perpetual wet blanket cannot easily hold his own with other men. That his wife believes in him re-enforces his enthusiasm and strengthens his will. A wise and discreet wife, if she happen to have a doubt, keeps it in her own bosom, and is far from the brutal honesty that speaks its mind, when doing so cannot affect the matter in hand.

"We miss Mrs. A.—more than words can tell," said a woman much engaged in works of charity. "After she moved away we found it impossible to secure anyone who could fill her place. Beyond anyone I ever knew, she had the art of working agreeably with others, and keeping different sorts of people in harmony. She said such pleasant things. When there was nothing pleasant to be said she kept silence."

I had known Mrs. A.—from her childhood. I knew her as a strong, well balanced woman, who had opinions and convictions, but did not think it necessary to go through the world with a chip on her shoulder. When no principle was involved, she refrained from expressing what she thought, and particularly she was careful not to comment unfavorably on others, present or absent. In passing, it may be observed that, while it requires nerve to make unfriendly criticisms to the person who is present, it is the nerve of a ruffian,

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Description of New Church.

Work on the new First Presbyterian church was begun a little over two years ago. Red butte stone, quarried in this state, has been used in construction, with terra cotta for ornamental work. The church is ninety-five feet wide, 165 feet long and eighty-two feet from its base to the highest tower. The estimated total outlay for its erection is \$160,000.

The Sunday school rooms, in which services will be held for the present, are divided into twelve partitions on each the first and second floor. These partitions are so arranged that every person can see the elevated platform at the west side from which addresses are to be made.

The auditorium proper, which will be completed about Thanksgiving, is constructed and supplied with exits. There are nine in all, two on the east, three on the west, and four on the south. It is intended that when the auditorium is completed and occupied the four exits on the south will comfortably handle all in attendance, leaving the others for occupants of the gallery or Sunday school rooms.

A feature of the new church will be the splendid art glass windows, one each on the west, south and east. Each is to be thirty-one feet high and eighteen feet wide and the area of glass included in the immense panes will probably exceed that in any other building in the state.

The church committee in charge of building consists of Rev. W. M. Paden, Thomas Weir and H. G. McMillan. It is believed that the design and interior work which remains to be done can be completed within six months.

nor prevaricate, nor exaggerate. One may tell a dastardly lie and not open his mouth. There are times when to be silent is to proclaim a falsehood. But speaking one's mind brusquely and boorishly is no part of truth-speaking.

If Doris has bought an unbecoming hat, why spoil her pleasure in it by exclaiming about her mistake? If Lucille is looking pale and ill, why inquire if anything ails her? Wait for an explanation. If your neighbor's son has been conditioned in his examinations and your son brings home the news, why step over to condole with the lad's mother? If Bridget makes heavy bread once in a way, why dwell on the mistake, when you have omitted to praise her for the loaves that are generally light as puffs and sweet as honey.

The Bible bids us speak the truth in love. That direction seems to cover the whole ground. Whoever brings love, true, long-suffering and unselfish, to bear on the business of life, need never have the least fear that she will sound like a tattler. Her words will be found to be of service to all.

It really takes a lot of self-repression and self-restraint, and altruism to make us able to live with one another in peace. And it is harder for some people to be decent than for others to be saints. But one thing we may do, and that is to keep still when what we say may do harm and not good.

Sweet friend, when thou and I are gone beyond earth's weary labor, When small shall be our need of praise From comrade or from neighbor, Then tender hands will bring us flowers, When love is past forgiving; Oh, take the lesson home today, Be patient with the living.

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